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New Color of Money Media Support

Editor's Note: Since publication of this document, the U.S. government issued a redesigned \$10 note in March 2006 and has modified its plans for future denominations. Please visit the [Currency Redesign Timeline](#) page for more information.

U.S. Unveils New \$20 Note With Background Colors ***The New Color of Money: Safer. Smarter. More Secure.***

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. government officials today unveiled a new \$20 note design with enhanced security features and subtle background colors. The new design is part of an ongoing effort to stay ahead of the counterfeiting of U.S. currency.

“U.S. currency is a worldwide symbol of security and integrity. This new design will help us keep it that way, by protecting against counterfeiting and making it easier for people to confirm the authenticity of their hard-earned money,” U.S. Treasury Secretary John W. Snow said. “In addition to keeping our currency safe from counterfeiters, we are working to ensure that more of those dollars stay in the pockets of American families. The swift enactment of the President’s Jobs and Growth package should do just that.”

“The soundness of a nation’s currency is essential to the soundness of its economy. And to uphold our currency’s soundness, it must be recognized and honored as legal tender, and counterfeiting must be effectively thwarted,” said Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal

Reserve Board of Governors.

Snow and Greenspan were joined today in unveiling the new \$20 note by U.S. Treasurer Rosario Marin; Tom Ferguson, director of the Treasury's Bureau of Engraving and Printing,

which produces U.S. currency; and W. Ralph Basham, director of the United States Secret Service, the law enforcement agency responsible for combating counterfeiting.

The new \$20 note will be issued in the fall, with new designs for the \$50 and \$100 following in 2004 and 2005. Redesign of the \$5 and \$10 notes is under consideration, but the \$1 and \$2 notes will not be redesigned. Even after the new money is issued, older-design notes will remain legal tender .

“This is *The New Color of Money*; it is safer because it is harder to fake and easier to check, smarter to stay ahead of tech-savvy counterfeiters, and more secure than ever,” said the Bureau of Engraving and Printing’s Ferguson. “The security features are easier than ever to use, and we want the public to learn how to use them, to protect their hard-earned money.”

The New Color of Money

The most noticeable difference in the notes is the subtle green, peach and blue colors featured in the background. Different colors will be used for different denominations, which will help everyone -- particularly those who are visually impaired -- to tell denominations apart.

While consumers should not use color to check the authenticity of their currency (relying instead on user-friendly security features -- see below), color does add complexity to the note, making counterfeiting more difficult.

The new bills will remain the same size and use the same, but enhanced portraits and historical images of Andrew Jackson on the face of the note and the White House on the back. The redesign also features symbols of freedom -- a blue eagle in the background, and a metallic green eagle and shield to the right of the portrait in the case of the \$20 note.

Security Features

The new \$20 design retains three important security features that were first introduced in the late 1990s and are easy for consumers and merchants alike to check:

- The *watermark* -- the faint image similar to the large portrait, which is part of the paper itself and is visible from both sides when held up to the light.
- The *security thread* -- also visible from both sides when held up to the light, this vertical strip of plastic is embedded in the paper. “USA TWENTY” and a small flag are visible along the thread.
- The *color-shifting ink* -- the numeral “20” in the lower-right corner on the face of the note changes from copper to green when the note is tilted. The color shift is more dramatic and easier to see on the new-design notes.

Because these features are difficult for counterfeiters to reproduce well, they often do not try. Counterfeiters are hoping that cash-handlers and the public will not check their money

closely.

Counterfeiting: Increasingly Digital

Counterfeiters are increasingly turning to digital methods, as advances in technology make digital counterfeiting of currency easier and cheaper. In 1995, for example, less than 1 percent of counterfeit notes detected in the U.S. was digitally produced. By 2002, that number had grown to nearly 40 percent, according to the U.S. Secret Service.

Yet despite the efforts of counterfeiters, U.S. currency counterfeiting has been kept at low levels, with current estimates putting the level of counterfeit notes in circulation worldwide at between 0.01 and 0.02 percent, or about 1-2 notes in every 10,000 genuine notes.

Secret Service Director Basham credits a combination of factors in keeping counterfeiting low: “Improved worldwide cooperation in law enforcement; improvements in currency design, like those in the new \$20 notes unveiled today; and a better-informed public all contribute to our success in the fight against counterfeiting.”

Public Education

Because the improved security features are more effective if the public knows about them, the U.S. government is undertaking a broad public education program. This program will ensure that people all over the world know the new currency is coming, and help them recognize and use the security features. The outreach will include cash-handlers, merchants, business and industry associations and the media. With roughly two-thirds of all U.S. currency held outside the U.S., the public education program will extend worldwide.

“From Wall Street to Fleet Street, from St. Petersburg, Florida, to St. Petersburg, Russia, our goal is the seamless, smooth introduction of *The New Color of Money*,” Treasurer Marin said.

To learn more about the new currency and to download an image of the new \$20 design, visit www.moneyfactory.com/newmoney